

“Bay of Pigs” = Mongoose!

[Earlier hypotheses, possibly also partly valid: Bay of Pigs (in Nixon’s language) = JFK Assassination. (Does that overlap with Mongoose?! That could explain the extraordinary secrecy, and prolonged secrecy, surrounding Mongoose; likewise, its tie-in with Castro assassination plots; and, of course, its association with invasion plans for Cuba and the resulting Cuban Missile Crisis; then, there’s Mongoose—and de Soto patrols—and provocation—with 34A and Tonkin Gulf. Or: Bay of Pigs = Castro assassination plots (tied in with JFK assassination? Certainly part of Mongoose!]

For thirty years, people have wondered what was meant when Nixon kept saying that he had leverage on Helms and Kennedy because of something to do with the Bay of Pigs. The smoking gun tape of July 23, 1972, consists of Nixon telling on the advice of Dean and Mitchell, telling Haldeman and Ehrlichman, to tell Vernon Walters, Deputy head of CIA, to tell Pat Gray, acting director of the FBI, to curtail the investigation of the money that went from Ken Dahlberg of Minnesota to Bern Barker’s bank account in Mexico, on the grounds that this would lead to covert activities by C.I.A. that should not be investigated on national security grounds. Haldeman and Ehrlichman, or together, or by themselves, did tell Walters this, and Walters did call off Gray for a

period of one to two weeks. The intent of this was to get the prosecutions, related to Watergate, cut-off so as to invoke only the men who were found in the Watergate, and not to involve Hunt and Libby, whose names had been found in the affects of the burglars. The concern about Hunt and Liddy as of June 23, was that they both knew of the number of crimes done by the Plumbers for Nixon in the White House, and specifically, both the Fielding break-in, and the attempted assault on me on May 3, 1972.

Liddy and Hunt, then in the hands of prosecutors and facing criminal charges, would be subject to revealing their knowledge of previous crimes ordered directly by Nixon, or by his immediate subordinates, such as Ehrlichman and Colson. In nearly every other case, neither Hunt nor Liddy actually could trace the chain of command to Nixon. They could only inculcate Mitchell, Haldeman, and McGruder. But in the cases of the acts against me, in particular, and some other, they could point directly to Nixon.

So it was crucial to Nixon that Hunt and Liddy, if possible, be protected from being subject to direct pressure from the prosecutors. Their incentive to tell the truth would be either to plea bargain, and to reduce their own responsibility, culpability, and sentence, or after conviction, or even before it, they might be given immunity and ordered to tell all they knew about previous crimes with no fifth amendment protection, and be subject to a perjury conviction if they lied.

This attempt then to use the CIA to call off an FBI investigation, or a path to the indictment of Hunt and Liddy, was a clear-cut criminal act and obstruction of justice. The incentive that Nixon gave Helms to comply with this potential criminal action, aside from a simple loyalty and obedience to the president's wishes (which might not prevail against his fear of criminal liability), was that if the investigation were pursued, it might open up a lot of things, including the Bay of Pigs, that were

better left unexamined. They didn't know that Helms did have anything to hide about the Bay of Pigs, but Ehrlichman had sensed that

There has always been since this stuff came out in 1974 a lot of people studying Watergate who have been puzzled over what Nixon meant when he threatened Helms that something might come out about the Bay of Pigs. [note: this goes back to Ehrlichman's and the President's dealing with Helms in 1971, after the PP came out when the Pres was very anxious to put out information embarrassing to Kennedy about the Bay of Pigs, and the Diem assassination. Helms was reluctant to give them this information on the grounds to both E and Nixon, that they would not want information embarrassing about them given to some other president. In the end when directly ordered to give him the reports, he said "I work only for one president at a time." He handed him the reports, though E thought that Helms held some back to protect himself and Kennedy. Therefore, if Helms was told to pursue this further, would uncover something to do with the Bay of Pigs, they hoped that he would feel in league with them and call off the FBI investigation. To a certain extent Nixon was telling the truth that none of this had to do with Watergate. So far, we know that the concern with keeping Liddy and Hunt out of this had to do with Watergate. In the end they were convicted, and that did not lead directly to Nixon and incriminate him in the Watergate break in. This was not a cover up of Nixon's involvement in Watergate because Liddy and Hunt were not in a position to tie the President to Watergate. Rather, this had to do with their protecting Nixon against the Plumbers and what they did. In particular, the things that involved me ordered by the president involved burglary and assault. He thought he had Helms on this.

This particular overture to Helms did not work, because as Haldeman always reported, Helms blew his top on this, saying that he was not trying to protect the Bay of Pigs, and the CIA has any reason to still hide things involving the Bay of Pigs. What was Nixon then referring to?

One hypothesis has been, based on a comment by Haldeman or somebody else, that Nixon used the Bay of Pigs as shorthand for something to do with the Kennedy assassination. This comes up in Oliver Stone's movie on Nixon where Ehrlichman asks Haldeman why he is talking about the Bay of Pigs in this connection. He says in the movie "I don't know" or he might have said something else [famous conspiracy quote] This has all been a puzzlement over the past thirty years.

Barker, Martinez, and Diego (men caught in Watergate, along with Sturgis and Hunt) were all involved in the Bay of Pigs. But they were also all involved in Mongoose. Also under Kennedy, but after the Bay of Pigs. It had one big secret connected with it. It was a major provocation leading to the deployment of missiles by Krushchev, which created the Cuban Missile crisis in 1962. This operation was under President Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy, and managed by my old boss General Edward Lansdale. Many aspects of Mongoose were kept secret for very strong political reason. One, an aspect that has never been made clear to this day, is that in the Mongoose documents it is clear that Lansdale made explicit that the aims of the project, to overthrow Castro, could not be met with anything short of US invasion. Mongoose itself dealt with covert activities and did not include invasion plans. Lansdale said on several occasions in writing those covert operations alone could not fulfill the goals of the President, only military intervention could, and Mongoose could contribute to that in a multitude of ways. The major way it could contribute is by provoking a Castro move against Guantanamo or against a U.S. naval ship, which would be an excuse for the US to invade. Mongoose emphasis on sabotage and subversion would then be an excuse to invade. Second, Mongoose activities would be a cover for an assassination effort against

Castro and his high officials. Lansdale did discuss assassination in the midst of this. Third, assassination plans were going ahead in 1962, including Mafia figures, as had been done under Eisenhower. Mongoose operatives could fake an attack on Guantanamo, disguised as Cuban soldiers, and use that as an excuse to attack Cuba. Castro himself would never know.

What has just come out this year from the National Security Archive, was a JCS recommendation to undertake activities in 1962 that would be an excuse for invasion, including domestic terrorist attacks against US citizens, such as attacking an airline. Invasion plans were made in 1962 under McNamara's direction. Mongoose, in other words, was an operation in many of its aspects, was political, in 1962 came very close to causing World War III, all out nuclear war, the closest the world has ever come, Mafia involvement. A covert war against Cuba under Kennedy was Mongoose. The CIA, forbidden to operate in this country, was running the operation from Florida, the largest CIA operational base in the world, running an operation against another country to sabotage it. Of course Mongoose used many Cuban exiles, and was a large operation, bigger than Bay of Pigs.

A measure of the scale of Mongoose, was that one of the ship captains that took people on boats from Miami to Cuba, did make over 300 [130?] boat trips into Cuba, his name was Martinez. Martinez, working for Hunt, was inside Fielding's office in September of 1971, and was in the group that was to incapacitate me totally in May of 1972, and was caught in the Watergate. Barker was in the same involvement, as were all of them. The records that came out in 1973 all talk of their involvement in the CIA. I'll bet that none of the documents in the prosecutor's office mentions the word Mongoose. Remember, they are caught in '72, they talk of their Bay of Pigs connection, People talk of Cuba I, and Cuba II in Washington, as if these were two discrete events unconnected, rather than interwoven. Mongoose was an interconnecting operation that went beyond the fall of

1961 up to the Cuban Missile crisis, and a little beyond it, then operations were discontinued, Lansdale was taken off it, and the operation wound down.

Conjecture: There was something super-secret, not about Liddy, but about Hunt. To get Hunt into this picture immediately threatened a very big disclosure that Helms wanted to keep quiet. Not because it embarrassed him or the CIA, but it made the CIA look bad because they were doing it for the President. There was something to be kept secret: all of these people were involved in Mongoose, and the word was never mentioned during the Watergate trial.

Second: Did Nixon know about Mongoose per se? He acts as if he did, but I don't know, a very interesting question. An ordinary president just coming into office, like Agnew or Carter, would not have known about Mongoose. Nixon, however, was described by Hunt as the White House operations officer for the Bay of Pigs under Eisenhower. His assistant, Cushman, a military aide (my old regimental commander) was running the Bay of Pigs because he had all the contacts. He retained many contacts with the Cuban community, specifically Mafia figures. His only confidant is Baby Rebozo, a central figure in the Mafia Cuban community. The likelihood is very high that Nixon when he was out of office knew about Mongoose. It was common knowledge among the Cubans during this time. The Bay of Pigs was probably Nixon's euphemism for Mongoose. He did know about it, and when he said Bay of Pigs in many connections, he means Mongoose.

Helms is furious, "Don't tell me about the Bay of Pigs, I don't have any problem with the Bay of Pigs." But he goes along with the order. Could these people blow up Mongoose? Yes, they were Mongoose! It will make CIA look very bad. I'm saying, the CIA were still, by all of their institutional standards and bureaucratic needs, very much keeping Mongoose a secret in 1972. That is a secret that remains to be kept, but the Bay of Pigs is mostly out. What we are talking about then,

is not the Kennedy assassination or the Bay of Pigs, but...I'm saying that Nixon did have then reason to hope that CIA would cover up the involvement of Howard Hunt, which Nixon wanted, not to protect Mongoose, but to protect the plumbers that he had created. Nixon is saying in 1972, don't go after Liddy or Hunt because Hunt can tell about 1960-61. No, this was a cover threat. It was meant to convey, "Don't go after Hunt, because he could reveal what he did in 1962, with all of these other guys, like Martinez and Barker. Nixon's real concern was not what Hunt did in 1960-61 for Kennedy or Eisenhower, it is what Hunt did for him in 1971 and 1972 against me, and other things.

We are looking at this thirty years later: Why was this not recognized during Watergate in 1972 and 1974, and since that time????? Why is it not common currency? The answer is: Mongoose is such a well kept secret that it would not at all known in 1972, 73, or 74, when Nixon actually leaves office. The investigations of CIA lead in the following way. The revelation by Dean that the CIA were actually involved in providing disguises for Hunt as a plumber, as against its charter as an international police agency, and had done psychological make-ups on me (a very illegal thing, acting like a domestic intelligence agency). That came out because of Dean's revelation on April 15, 1972, about the Fielding break-in. That then leads to Hunt's grand jury testimony in which he corrects his earlier perjury, describing the CIA involvement in these matters. Between April 27 when it comes out in public in my trial, Hunt goes to the Grand Jury. For the next two weeks there was talk of CIA involvement. My trial ends on May 10

On May 10, James Schlesinger leaves as head of CIA and was replaced by Colby. His last act was to write an order to the inspector general to investigate all violations of domestic law by CIA. That leads to an inspector general's report, known as the family jewels. It lists over a hundred violations of domestic law by CIA. Parts of it, or all of it, are leaked by Sye Hersch. He got

confirmation for a lot of it from Colby. He wrote a huge series, giving him the Pulitzer Prize I think. That leads then to the church committee report at the end of 1973 or the end of 1974. That leads to the church committee being set up to investigate the CIA. Even earlier in an attempt to head off that investigation, President Ford sets up the Rockefeller investigation to investigate assassination attempts. Both of these bring out the Mongoose operations, of which assassination plans were a part. So we learn about Mongoose in 1975-6 when the reports come out. Taylor Branch and George Kryle write an article in Harper's, called the Secret War Against Cuba. This is thirteen years after it actually occurred, and a lot of Mongoose documents began to be declassified in 1990, which shows a lot of aspects; the provocation stuff just came out.

Mongoose was crucial to the instigation of the Cuban missile crisis, the core of it, that we provoked it. The movie Thirteen Days speculates as to why he placed the missiles. He said he did so to prevent an invasion. This was ridiculed at the time since the Bay of Pigs was a failure. The movie Thirteen Days, in the year 2000, does not mention Mongoose, nor mention a covert war against Cuba that could rationalize the acts it is discussing. It gives a false impression on both Russian motivations and ours. It is rather astonishing that Mongoose is not mentioned, really.

We now have the tapes of the ex-con meetings over the Cuban Missile crisis; they are slightly blocked out. There is an index, but Mongooses is left out. However, it does ask, Why does Castro taking this reckless effort? There is no evidence in notes or tapes released about the crisis at the Ex-Con meeting, mentioned to such people that we have been running covert raids and naval exercises intending to provoke Castro. Yet, the high officials appear in the record as to not be discussing it. One possibility is that they were discussing it, and these parts have been edited out for national security. The published discussion shows no evidence that this was brought out. How could it be that it was never discussed?

Answer: We know that at least half a dozen people present knew about Mongoose: Maxwell Taylor, Bobby Kennedy, RFJ, Kilpatrick, McNamara, Alexis Johnson, and certainly Rusk, and McComb. They knew the answer to that question as to why Krushchev was placing missiles in Cuba. Not everyone in the room knew about Mongoose, and they would have needed Ex-con was essentially a charade and had very little to do with advising the President since our body could not realistically advise him about the motivations of the Soviets despite their background. How could they recommend policy option if you had no idea about US and Soviet motivations? What were they doing in that room? Building a consensus for Kennedy to state later that all of his advisers agreed in the particular plan. Both Bobby Kennedy and Taylor left the same day as the ex-con meetings to meet on Mongoose.

Two more indications of real secrecy that I've wanted to include for some time: I was authorized to study the Cuban Missile Crisis under a support panel consisting of the head of Police Planning in the State Department, the Director of Staff under the Joint Chief of Staff, the Deputy of the CIA, the number two man in state Alexis Johnson were to make the files of their departments open so that I could study nuclear decision making, including the Cuban missile crisis.

I had reinstated a clearance I had earlier for communications intelligence for reconnaissance satellites for the U-2. These gave me access to all source intelligence, which means I could access information from all sources. I got a level higher than that, an operational clearance, to study the operations of the U-2, when did it fly, where did it fly to? It was called an Ideal Clearance (meaning U-2 operations). A big question of the clearance was why did they not see the missiles until late in the game? I got into the minutes of the operation to find this out. In that connection, I was able at CIA to read the communications intelligence. I also read a library shelf of reports that was probably twelve feet long including every report by a refugee from Cuba, or any other source, of the presence

of missiles in Cuba to find out why the warning came so late. I looked over several thousand pages of possible missile sites, but most were reports about SAMs rather than surface to surface.

After months studying this crisis, I reached several conclusions. It was during the course of that study in 1964...I reported on my study to Walt Rostow in a meeting, which included Desmond Fitzgerald, head of covert operations, and Richard Helms, head of covert operations. I made my report about the patterns revealed in the report. In the course of that study, and after receiving four clearances (T, K, and I), I never heard of the word Mongoose. I first heard of it in 1975 with the rest of the country. I didn't know about the lapse in the ex-con minutes. Paul Nitze, secretary of the navy, back then he had been head of ISA, again no mention in the notes of Mongoose, so it is clear to me that they did not discuss it. Thus, ex-con was virtually a hoax.

In 1964, then, and 1965, and for the next ten years, I did not hear the word Mongoose. That lead me, by the way, to ...I was the biggest student of the Cuban Missile Crisis in the government during this time; Bobby Kennedy told me crucial things about the crisis that have never come out in print. However, I have to this day have had an incorrect understanding of why the Cuban missile crisis occurred. I had the impression that Kennedy's "weakness" in the Bay of Pigs had been a factor in Krushchev's placing missiles in Cuba, like the Munich pattern allowed Hitler into WWII. This included me in Vietnam for the same reason. If we backed down, then it would give them reason to think we were weak and attack us. That link may not have been true at all, since any sign of weakness that Kennedy appeared to have masked a provocation that we had supplied through Mongoose. The same pattern repeated itself with the Tonkin Gulf, only in this case it was caused 100 percent by our provocation of the North Vietnamese. Had I known about Tonkin Gulf in 1964, I did not know that two years later, the entire same cast, except JFK, had all been involved in provoking Krushchev.

I read a source years ago that made clear that we had a Desoto patrol, an intelligence destroyer, off Havana during the missile crisis. This says to me that one of their plans for provoking an attack on an American ship, which would in turn give us the excuse to invade Cuba, was the exact same plan that was used two years later: an intelligence destroyer laying in wait off the shore of Cuba (North Vietnam), as covert operations were carried out on the mainland to entice the enemy into war. [In Schlesinger's book about Bobby Kennedy]

The final decisive factor: I go from ISA, then to Vietnam under General retired Lansdale. He is boxed in bureaucratically there; we do nothing but "make work" stuff. The evenings are spent bullshitting and drinking with Lansdale and all of his other people getting drunker as the evening went on. Tongues wagged freely. I heard stories about their covert operations in Philippine sand Vietnam in the mid-1950s. Lansdale at one point tells me, alone, about being asked by the President if he would be willing to be part of an operation that might involve the assassination of Diem. Lansdale had lost his chance of going to Vietnam by saying, "No, I can't do that."

Even after I left Lansdale, I continued to come back and hear stories. In the course of those two years, I never heard form my mention, Lansdale: Mongoose or Cuba. Though I heard him mention Bobby Kennedy once or twice, I never heard that he had worked for RFK, or that he had anything to do with operations against Cuba. This is in 1965-67, and it was two years earlier in 1963 that he had ceased to manage the largest operation in CIA history, against Cuba, for Bobby Kennedy. What I heard endlessly about were his operations for Allen Dulles in the late 1940s in the Philippines and the early 1950s and in Vietnam in the mid-1950s. Never a word about what he had done two years earlier. I only learned this information in 1975 from the church committee. I had thirteen clearances, and was not told this information. which tells me that the secrecy blanket over the government is pretty thick. I had thirteen special clearances, and would never have thought that

Lansdale would have been capable of preserving any covert stories from me, and would have been able to do it. That was the amount of secrecy involved in this operation. There is reason for it to be pretty high: connection to Cuban Missile Crisis, connection to Mafia, connection to the Bay of Pigs. The Mafia connection was not revealed into the mid-1970s. When Watergate was pouring out the truth, this still didn't come out: the covert war against Cuba, the attempts to assassinate Castro, and the involvement of the mob. All three of those are connected, possibly, to be at work in the assassination of JFK. Many people believe this. All of these Cubans, by the way, were involved in drug trafficking after the Bay of Pigs.

Mongoose has come out so belatedly, and in sequential form bit by bit, that I am positive that it has never been fully integrated into the Cuban Missile Crisis, Watergate, and Vietnam. In short, I suddenly saw in the Kutler book: why was Nixon and Helms communicating about the Bay of Pigs? The Bay of Pigs is a way of mentioning the same men, agencies, and operational methods who took part in Mongoose, one of the biggest secrets still kept by the American government. Euphemisms are great for talking about one thing, and meaning another.

Kutler, pgs. 468: Haldeman to Nixon: there was concern about Bay of Pigs: There was concern about Bay of Pigs coming out---you told us, you know, get in Helms on this promptly because Helms---I think you had some knowledge that I didn't know about---that Helms was concerned about some Bay of Pigs stuff at that point in time because Helms blocked at that meeting, and said, well OK, I'm not concerned about the Bay of Pigs because no matter what comes out or something. That's the part I remember clearly is Bay of Pigs stuff.

President Nixon: Well, I remember you saying that because CIA people were in this, to get them in...Now, that doesn't bother me---it would only would bother me if...Walters were told to go over to Gray and say, look cool your investigation. In fact, here's the problem, and then Congress will

understand...The problem with the memcom does not involve you, but it does potentially involve John [Ehrlichman], according to Al...[I]t could...appear that John was trying to get Walters to talk to Gray to basically make it appear more like that there's more of a national, of a CIA and other kind of a thing...I hope you talk to John...

John should say his only concern was the whole CIA involvement and so forth and wanted to be sure that the---this investigation of Watergate didn't get out, as he put it, didn't get out of hand. John used that term, apparently, in the conversation...

Haldeman: Getting out of hand had nothing to do with apprehending the Watergate criminals and trying them. Getting out of hand had to do with exactly what's found out--

President Nixon: Yeah.

Haldeman: ---which is we believe all this Pentagon Papers.

President Nixon: That's right.

Haldeman: ---investigation-type set-up, leave the Plumbers operation-type stuff.

They knew I worked for Lansdale for two years, so it would be natural for them to assume that I probably knew.

[break]

President Nixon: I suggested getting in Walters and Helms...I don't know why I suggested it. You think it is the Bay of Pigs?

Haldeman: And, that's the only thing I remember really about it was the concern about the Bay of Pigs stuff and Helms---

President Nixon: And Helms said he wasn't concerned...[T]here's no problem in this. No, I think we did it just straight arrow on this sort of thing. He assured me there was no problem on the thing.